

for their record of academic and athletic accomplishment and for their admirable decision to enlist in the United States Navy. I also express my appreciation to Our Community Salutes of Northern Virginia for providing this opportunity to be among the first to say to each of these young men and women: "Thank you."

I have had the privilege of working with Our Community Salutes of Northern Virginia since its inception in 2011. That year my office was contacted by one of the founding parents who upon learning that her son and other students at his school who had decided to enlist would not receive any recognition during graduation, joined with other parents to organize the first enlistee recognition ceremony of its kind in the region. The first ceremony recognized 9 students. In two short years that number has grown to 101.

With graduation season upon us, thousands of young people in my community, and millions across the nation, are preparing for the next chapter in their lives. Some will pursue higher education or vocational training, others will seek to enter the workforce immediately, and many will answer the call to serve their community and their country.

The United States of America has distinguished itself from other nations through the entrepreneurship and spirit of our people, the knowledge that we can achieve any goal if we set our minds to it, our inherent compassion and generosity, our fierce patriotism, and the extraordinary sacrifices and dedication to country exhibited by the members of our Armed Forces. The young men and women from our community who will be enlisting possess an abundance of each of these qualities. I join with their families and friends in congratulating and commending the following graduates on their enlistment in the United States Navy:

Jessica Blas Salazar; Kafahni Crowell; Tyler Deleeuw; Bryan Ignacio; Jinsuk Lee; Jay Lee; Hasmeed Machuca; Ashley Sager; Timothy Skubal; Daniel Vanderplas; Evertt Vasquez; Christina Vithaya; Lars Yates

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding the courage and dedication of these graduates and in assuring them and their families that the full support and resources of the U.S. Congress and the American people will be behind them on every step of their journey in defense our nation's freedom.

IN TRIBUTE TO THE FALLEN HOUSTON FIREFIGHTERS

HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 4, 2013

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my deepest sympathies

for the Houston firefighters who perished or were injured due to the blaze at the Southwest Inn and Bhojan Restaurant, which took place on May 31, 2013. Upon visiting the site of the horrific tragedy, I was saddened to see the remains of a building consumed by a pernicious inferno. I was also able to appreciate the courage and spirit necessary to be a firefighter at the scene on that fateful day.

To date, while "in the line of duty," four firefighters have died and many others have been hospitalized due to their injuries in what has become the most lethal day in the history of the Houston Fire Department (HFD). Among the deceased were: an eleven-year-veteran of the HFD, Captain Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) Matthew Renaud, and a recent graduate from the fire academy, Anne Sullivan, along with Firefighter EMT Robert Garner and Engineer Operator EMT Robert Bebee.

Our firefighters selflessly risked their lives and limbs to save as many civilians as possible. While tragedies such as these shock and emotionally devastate us, we should remember the extraordinary heroism displayed by our firefighters: They rushed to the scene battling flames on both the roof as well as within the motel and restaurant, thereby preventing a single civilian fatality.

Mr. Speaker, since the fire, I have visited with firefighters from the HFD at the Houston Professional Firefighters Association Union Hall. I was truly inspired by their dedication to each other and devotion to public safety. As a result, I now have a greater appreciation for what is for me a chilling expression "in the line of duty."

COMMENDING LOCAL 2013 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES FOR THEIR DECISION TO ENLIST IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS AND OUR COMMUNITY SALUTES OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA FOR HOSTING THE THIRD ANNUAL HIGH SCHOOL ENLISTEE REC- OGNITION CEREMONY

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 4, 2013

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize 51 graduating seniors in my community for their record of academic and athletic accomplishment and for their admirable decision to enlist in the United States Marine Corps. I also express my appreciation to Our Community Salutes of Northern Virginia for providing this opportunity to be among the first to say to each of these young men and women: "Thank you."

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its inception in 2011. That year my office was contacted by one of the founding parents who upon learning that her son and other students at his school who had decided to enlist would not receive any recognition during graduation, joined with other parents to organize the first enlistee recognition ceremony of its kind in the region. The first ceremony recognized 9 students. In two short years that number has grown to 101.

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Kamo Abdulrahman; Jonathan Aguilar; Kevin Amaya; Jackson Burgess; Benjamin Burruss; Daniel Chhieu; Emily Collins; Latrice Coram; Larry Davis; James Degrafft; Kevin Diaz; Ludvigsen Diaz; Aaron Elassal; Jacob Facas; Mario Fajardo; Azad Fattahi; Ismael Ferman; Christopher Foerter; Spencer Gonsalvez; Veronica Gonzalez; Matthew Gregory; Jeffrey Hong; Nicholas Hunter; Mateusz Laguna; Gwendetta Mabry; Isaac Martinez; Tyreek Minter; Robert Mondloch; Yenifer Montalvo; Matthew Moser; Jason Pabontancara; Omar Paniagua; Tae Park; Erik Ploompuu; Herson Reyes; Jorge Ribera-Pedraza; Carlos Rodriguez; Leonel Santos; Romeo Sarmiento, III; Bradley Sherman; Simranjit Singh; Joshua Skym; David Smith; Kyle Stears; Brittany Thompson; Christian Valencia; Leopoldo Valiente Marquez; Joseph Stephen Vanwijngaarden; Deyvis Vasquez Soto; William Vo; Jaime Zamora

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding the courage and dedication of these graduates and in assuring them and their families that the full support and resources of the U.S. Congress and the American people will be behind them on every step of their journey in defense our nation's freedom.